REPORT FROM VIRGINIA

The 2002 gathering of the Nail-Ray Association was held in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, where our Pearce and Bass ancestors lived before moving on to North Carolina and eventually Indiana. The home base for our reunion was the historic Smithfield Inn in Smithfield, Virginia. Activities included a get-together banquet and business meeting Friday evening, June 7, at Smithfield Station Marina; a bus tour of Pearce and Bass lands and related historic sites on Saturday, June 8; and worship service at historic Antioch Christian Church on Sunday morning, June 9.

We finally got to meet our cousins the Lawsons who live in nearby Newport News, Virginia. From left to right: Cheryl Lynn (Lawson) Long, John Whitman Lawson, Sr., John Whitman Lawson, Jr., Julia Wray Lawson, Helen Fay (Wray) Lawson, Diane Rebecca (Priddy) Lawson, Jamie Lynn Long. Helen is the daughter of Robert Isom Wray. Helen and John still own the Thomas Ray–James Wray farm in Shelby County, Indiana.

Thirty-five members of the clan gathered for the Friday evening banquet and business meeting at the Smithfield Station Marina, overlooking the yacht harbor on the scenic Pagan River.

Alan Monette, current owner of Basse's Choice Plantation, gives us a personal tour of the property. Captain Nathaniel Basse landed on this peninsula at the mouth of the James River in 1621. Our ancestors Tabitha (Bass) Wray, wife of James Wray, and Benjamin Bass, husband of Susannah (Ray) Bass are probably descendants of Nathaniel Basse.

St. Luke's Church, built circa 1632, the oldest surviving English church in North America. Nathaniel Basse was probably a founding member, and our ancestor George Pearce probably attended this church in the late 1600's.
Antioch Christian Church, northwest of Windsor, Isle of Wight County, Virginia. George Pearce acquired 2100 acres in this location in 1671 and another 400 acres in 1684. In 1746, John and Nathan Pearce, grandsons of George Pearce, donated 1 1/2 acres of that land to the Newport Parish for the site of this church. George Pearce is the great-grandfather of our Elizabeth (Pearce) Ray.

Seacock Swamp, near Seacock Corner, Southampton County, Virginia. George Pearce and his son Philip both patented land in this area in the early 1700's.

Bridge over Wildcat Swamp, near Faison, Northampton County, North Carolina. Nathan Pearce owned 560 acres in this area from 1754-1774. Nathan's daughter Elizabeth (Pearce) Ray was probably born here.

After church service on Sunday, fourteen of us returned to the Smithfield Inn for a farewell brunch.

NEXT YEAR — TENNESSEE!

James and Clarene Russell have graciously volunteered to host next year's get-together in western Tennessee. Dates for 2003 will be June 6-8. Details will be forthcoming in the April 2003 newsletter. See you in Tennessee!
Family Members Present at the 2002 Meeting

The family of THOMAS RAY (1762-1829) and ELIZABETH (PEARCE) RAY (1767-1844):

From HUDSON RAY:

Through Barnabas Ray:  David Walter Ross (wife Janet), Springfield, VA
Billie Lee (Alcott) Rammelsberg (husband Glen), Blairstown, IA
Dori (Rammelsberg) Dvorak (husband Tom), Dysart, IA
Nathan Alcott Dvorak, Dysart, IA

Through Mary Ray Goodrich:  Richard Weakley, Shelbyville, IN

From JAMES WRAY:

Through Cherry (Wray) Nail:  Thomas G. Plymate (wife Lynda), Springfield, MO
Robert E. Thomas (wife Arlene), Shelbyville, IN
Patricia (Thomas) Montgomery (husband Floyd), Waldron, IN
Helen (Wray) Lawson (husband John, Jr.), Newport News, VA
John Whitman Lawson, Jr. (wife Diane), Newport News, VA
Cheryl Lynn (Lawson) Long, Newport News, VA

Through Charles W. Wray:  Janis McCord, Sultana, CA
Janet Thomason, Mesa, AZ

From GILLY RAY BYERLY:

Through Elizabeth Byerly Hill:  Katy (Morse) Bruce (husband Bob), Kenney, IL
Dallas Michael Morse, Kenney, IL
Joan Morse, Kenney, IL

From SUSANNAH (RAY) BASS:

Through Frances Bass Thayer:  Lolita (Thayer) Guthrie (husband Mearl), Bowling Green, OH

From MARTHA (RAY) NAIL:

Through Christina Nail (l) Berry:  James M. Russell (wife Clarene), Collierville, TN
Through Perla Nail (l) Steward:  Janet (Morgan) Ross (husband David), Springfield, VA

GUESTS:  Inez and Bill Brown, Zebulon, NC
Paul Lippert, Shelbyville, IN

Members who could not attend sent their greetings:

Sue Bogardus, Kentucky  Sorry to hear of Chuck’s death.  If Carl were living we would be in Virginia with you.  I have heart problems.  Keep busy in the historical association.  Love.

Hugh & Ruth Brady  NEW ADDRESS.  Ruth is not able to travel but improved.  Have a great meeting.

Barbara Brittian, Texas  What a great weekend - wish I were with you.

Laurel Campbell  In process of compiling information on descendants of Chaney Ray and Hugh Campbell.  laurelcampbell@hotmail.com

Lillian Conrad, Florida  Wish I could be with you.

Carolyn Byland Frish  Researching family of Benjamin and Malinda (Nail) Heistand.  airboatmomma@aol.com

Wilma Gearhart  My mother’s maiden name was Nellie Blanche Alcox.  Thanks so much for sending the Nail-Ray information over the years.  I am 88 and live alone.

Patricia Lorentzen, California  Planned to attend - illness altered plans.  Best wishes to all.

Rhoda & Harold Mackenzie  This is a relatively new address.

Richard Mansfield, Oregon  Hello to all.

David & Kelly Meyer, Utah  Hello to all - sounds like a great weekend.

David S. Nail  "Just getting started tracing my roots."  [Note: Dave was a geology student of mine in the early 1980's at SMSU. He's now working for the USGS in Rolla. He is a descendant of John Nail and Martha (Ray) Nail. Small world! TGP]

Mario & Dee Nelson, Minnesota  What a great weekend.

Eleanor Neumayer  NEW ADDRESS.  Will be celebrating 92nd birthday in August. Really appreciates all the wonderful pictures in the Nail-Ray newsletters.

407 Russell Ave.  #801
Gaithersburg, MD  20877
Gone But Not Forgotten:

This year we mourn the loss of eight of our long-time members:
- Shirley Calame, Witt, Illinois
- Julia Chesser, Shelbyville, Indiana
- Charles E. Nail, Noblesville, Indiana
- Lawrence Nail, Martinsville, Indiana
- Thelma Russell, Oxford, Mississippi
- Martha C. Sweat, Decatur, Georgia
- Opal Wearmouth, Lorimore, Iowa
- F. Allen Wray, Pleasanton, California

Lost Souls:

Newsletters to the following members have been returned with no forwarding address. If you know the whereabouts of any of these individuals, please let us know.

Anderson, Mr. Lynn
4405 67th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322

Baker, Harold
Wagoner, IL 62562

Barclay, Bonnie
8224 Shoemaker Drive
Marysville WA 98271

Berthouex, Amy T.
1490 Central
Memphis, TN 38104-4906

Bonnette, Mrs. R. S.
3232 Magevney St.
Memphis, TN 38128-6533

Byerly, Devron
516 Malvern Ave
Fullerton, CA 92832

Chase, Mrs. Robert C.
142 DeAnza Circle
Ontario, CA 91760

Cleveland, Esther
1509 E First
Streator, IL 61364-1703

Cobler, Ken & Laura
435 Riverside Chase Circle
Greer, SC 29650

Engleman, Ivan M.
P O Box 4417
Casper, WY 82604

Enright, Mrs. E. J
6202 Scenic Drive
Yakima, WA 98908

Eyman, Mrs. Clarence
R R 3 Box 138
Morrisonville, IL 62556

Gates, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth
3597 Urbana
Mira Loma, CA 92752

Gregg, Mrs. Charles R
2734 S. Peach Hollow Circle
Pearland TX 77584

Gregory, Elsie C.
640 Greencastle Rd
Mooresville, IN 46185

Haen, Susan J.
1880 Cliffview Court
Oshkosh, WI 54901-2502

Hubard, William S.
2202 Carter Rd/ SW
Roanoke, VA 24015-3522

LaFreinier, Mrs. William
P O Box 1627 416 McKenzie St
Yelm, WA 98597

Lancaster, Dorothy
R. R 3 Box 86B
Carlinville, IL 62626-9533

Lake, Mrs. Thomas M.
134 Kelly Cove
Jackson, MS 39212-3522

Mincher, Mrs. Richard
2004 Watson Street
Fort Worth, TX 76103

Morgan, A Clement
105 Wood Stone Dr
Vicksburg MS 39180

Nail, Clarence S
16121 16th Ave
Clear Lake CA 95422

Nail, Larry
608 1st St
Rock Rapids IA 51246

Overton, Melvin L.
R. R. 3
Indianola, IA 50125

Rees, Mrs Harvey
P O Box 242
Abingdon IL 61410

Richardson, John B.
Route 2, Box 35
Byhalia, MS 38611

Rowe, Nell R.
845 Great Oaks Drive
Horn Lake, MS 38673

Shaw, Mary
R R 2
Clinton IL 61727

Smith, June Brower
301 10th St
Crystal City MO 63019

Thompson, Mrs Edna
720 Seneca St. #416
Seattle WA 98101

Thompson, Mrs. Joseph A. Jr.
1541 Marshal Lane
Conyers, GA 30208-2593

Thrasher, Kay
6302 E 12th
Wichita KS 67208

Walberg, Teresa
6009 N Kings Highway
Alexandria, VA 22303

If you have not yet paid your dues ($10) for 2002 and want to stay on our Mailing List, please send them to

NAIL-RAY ASSOCIATION
2442 W. Boggstown Road
Shelbyville, IN 46176